



United States Department of the Interior



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In Reply Refer To:
43 CFR 4100 (NV010.07)

Notice of Livestock Agreement

Extreme drought conditions exist within the Blue Wing/Seven Troughs Allotment. The allotment was recently visited by BLM staff to evaluate drought conditions. Field observations indicate that forage and water are limited and that severe drought conditions exist in portions of the Kamma Mountains, Lava Beds and Seven Troughs Herd Management Areas (HMAs) as well as the Granite Springs Wash.

As of July 23, 2013 the U.S. Drought Monitor reported that the Winnemucca District (WD) is still experiencing extreme drought conditions. Below normal precipitation has resulted in decreased soil moisture, decreased plant vigor and growth while some locations have little or no current year's growth. As a result, monitoring shows that 41 – 80% utilization of key perennial species by livestock and wild horses has occurred. Excess numbers of wild horses are competing for drought impacted insufficient forage and unavailable water resources within three HMAs and outside the HMA boundaries, resulting in the need to conduct an emergency removal of wild horses to protect drought-impacted rangeland resources and wild horse health.

Due to drought conditions that have resulted in insufficient forage and unavailable water for wild horses and for livestock, BLM plans to conduct an emergency wild horse gather in the Blue Wing/Seven Troughs Allotment on August 1, 2013, in response to severe drought conditions. The purpose of the gather is to remove 200 wild horses from the emergency gather area in the northeast corner of the allotment. The removal of those wild horses will alleviate pressure on diminishing rangeland resources present in the emergency gather area and provide an opportunity for the regeneration of forage and water resources.

Pursuant to the Winnemucca District Drought Response Plan Environmental Assessment (DOI-BLM-NV-W000-2013-0001-EA), portions of an allotment(s) that lack vegetation and/or water, are in poor condition, or when continued grazing use poses an imminent likelihood of significant resource damage, the authorized officer may close or modify authorized grazing use in all or portions of an allotment. (43 CFR §4110.3-3(b)).

As described in the Winnemucca District Drought Response Plan EA, in cases where Drought Response Actions (DRAs) are necessary to respond to drought conditions in areas where livestock and wild horse and burro use overlap, both livestock and wild horse and burro DRAs

should be implemented concurrently. In order to protect vegetation and the watershed resources that have been impacted by severe drought conditions, the BLM WD has requested that Dufurrena Sheep Company voluntarily agree not to graze within the northeast corner of the Blue Wing/Seven Troughs Allotment (i.e., the wild horse emergency gather area) from August 1, 2013 and continuing through one full growing season, (i.e., until approximately June 15, 2014).

This agreement will remain in effect through one growing season (June 2014) or until monitoring data and/or professional observations suggests/indicates range conditions have improved and permitted grazing activity can be sustained within the wild horse emergency gather area.

Dufurrena Sheep Company is not currently grazing within the emergency gather area, and through this Agreement, Dufurrena Sheep Company acknowledges and agrees to:

- Make application for grazing non-use within the wild horse emergency gather area through one growing season (April-June 15).

BLM agrees that:

- BLM will approve the grazing application for non-use for the wild horse emergency gather area;
- In order for livestock use to resume in the wild horse emergency gather area, the combined perennial and annual vegetative cover for grasses must meet or exceed 5% of the ground cover for the appropriate ecological site. Most of the wild horse emergency gather area is represented by a Gravelly Loam 4-8" precipitation zone ecological site. Potential vegetative composition for the Gravelly Loam ecological site is: 25% perennial grasses, 5% forbs and 70% shrubs. The approximate ground cover for the site is 15%. Based on the natural productivity of the wild horse emergency gather area and the values described in the ecological site description, the combined 5% ground cover of annual and perennial grasses has been chosen for livestock reintroduction to fairly represent current site conditions and potential.
- The Allotment will be monitored prior to June 15, 2014 to determine forage/water conditions. If conditions warrant, the WD will accept an application for grazing use within the emergency gather area of the Blue Wing/Seven Troughs Allotment, and authorized livestock use can resume in accordance with the terms and conditions listed on your grazing permit as appropriate upon approval by BLM.
- The BLM will notify Dufurrena Sheep Company of the opportunity to participate in BLM's evaluations of forage and water conditions associated with these changes in grazing use within the terms and conditions of your grazing permit.

/s/Buster Dufurena
Buster Dufurrena, Permittee
Dufurrena Sheep Co.

July 30, 2013
Date

/s/ Derek Messmer
Derek Messmer
Field Manager
Humboldt River Field Office

July 30, 2013
Date